

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15

STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-03 INR-07

NSAE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 L-03 H-02 PA-01

PRS-01 FEAE-00 IGA-02 /089 W
----- 128181

O R 231720Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8054

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 0115

ABIDJAN ALSO FOR REDSO; NIAMEY FOR RDO

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, EINV, PFOR, DM, US

SUBJ: INDEMNIFICATION OF TEXACO AND MOBIL

REF A - COTONOU 106, B - COTONOU 81, C - STATE 11694,

1. DIR OF WEST EUROPE/NORTH AMERICA DIVISION (CAKPO)
OF BENIN FORMINISTRY TELEPHONED ME THIS AFTERNOON TO SAY
THAT:

A. MIN OF FINANCE HAS PREPARED LETTERS ADDRESSED TO TEXACO
AND MOBIL, SAYING THAT BENIN GOVT WILL BE PREPARED TO COMMENCE
NEGOTIATING ON THEIR CLAIMS ANYTIME AFTER FEB 20. LETTERS
WILL BE MAILED AS SOON AS MINISTER APPROVES.

B. FORMINISTRY WILL CONFIRM ABOVE BY NOTE TO EMBASSY SOMETIME
NEXT WEEK.

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2. IN TONE OF TRIUMPH CAKPO WENT ON TO SAY HE ASSUMED THE

ABOVE-DESCRIBED INTENDED ACTIONS WOULD GET BENIN OFF HOOK INsofar AS GSP AND HICKENLOOPER AMENDMENT SANCTIONS WERE CONCERNED. SINCE BENIN GOVT HAD NOW DEMONSTRATED ITS GOOD FAITH IN THIS MATTER, USG SHOULD RECIPROCATE WITH GESTURE PERMITTING BRIDGE/DAM ACTIVITIES TO GO FORWARD AGAIN. IN RESPONSE I SAID WE WELCOMED NEWSCE ESTABLISHMENT OF BEGINNINGS OF TIME TABLE BUT I WAS EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL BENIN'S DECLARATION OF INTENTION IN THE MATTER WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO HAVE DECISIVE EFFECT. EVEN RESOLUTION OF CLAIMS WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH TO RESOLVE ALL PROBLEMS RE AID LOANS (ONLY SOME OF WHICH ARE RELATED TO INDEMNIFICATION OF OIL COMPANIES). I ADDED THAT NEWS HE HAD CONVEYED TO ME CONSTITUTED POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT, AND WE LOOKED FORWARD TO RECEIPT OF CONFIRMATORY NOTE. I WAS CERTAIN PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH OIL COMPANIES WOULD BE FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY IN WASHINGTON. IN ANY EVENT BENIN GOVT COULD REST ASSURED THAT ALL DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS MATTER WOULD BE REPORTED PROMPTLY BY THE EMBASSY AND WEIGHED CAREFULLY IN WASHINGTON.

3. COMMENT: CAKPO'S PHONE CALL IS FIRST GOOD NEWS WE HAVE HAD ON THIS SUBJECT SINCE BENIN GOVT NATIONALIZED TEXACO AND MOBIL ON 3 DEC 74. HOWEVER, NEITHER WE NOR THE COMPANIES HAVE ANYTHING IN WRITING YET.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT DEPT AND ABIDJAN NOTIFY TEXACO AND MOBIL RE MINISTRY OF FINANCE LETTERS REPORTEDLY SOON TO BE ON THE WAY TO THEM, AND THE FEB DATE.
ENGLE

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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